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## A MEDIEVAL INTERNATIONALIST.

ARBITRATION, a league of peace and a council of conciliation seem to be very modern suggestions as methods of avoiding war between civilized nations. Some hints of these, however, can be found in Kant's *Perpetual Peace* and in the *grand dessein* as expounded by the Abbé de S. Pierre. These schemes belong to the Revolutionary and Renaissance periods. But even before, in the Middle Ages, similar schemes are to be found in the work of Petrus de Bosco (Pierre Dubois).

The political acuteness of this brilliant thinker can only be understood by allowing for the fact that he had listened at Paris to "that most prudent friar Thomas Aquinas"<sup>1</sup> and by remembering that he wrote while the official politicians were engineering war after war for no purpose. His work on international politics is contained in the unprinted *Summaria brevis . . . . abbreviationis guerrarum* and in the "*De recuperatione Terre Sancte*," published (1891) in the *Collection des Textes*. I propose to summarize and comment upon the latter, not as of merely archeological interest, but as an early attempt to grapple with the same political problem which we now face.

The treatise is supposed to deal with a plan for recovering the Holy Land and is addressed in 1306 to Edward I, "King of England and Scotland, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine," as a great legislator and one who was

<sup>1</sup> Par. 63, *De recup. Terre Sancte*. (In medieval Latin final *æ* becomes *e*.)

specially interested in a new crusade. But this initial purpose of the treatise, even if it was intended by the author as more than a mere *captatio benevolentiae*, is certainly subordinated to the general problem of international policy among the European states.<sup>2</sup> The order of the argument is confused, the author continually going back to a subject after he has left it for some other. He writes well, but too eagerly to be as exact as the philosophers of his day. He is genuinely excited by the pressing importance of establishing peace. I shall, therefore, not follow the order of the treatise, but state first the nature of the problem as it appears to Dubois and then his suggestions for solution.

War between European countries and kings, says Dubois, is the chief hindrance to "having time for progress in morality and knowledge." War breeds war until war becomes a habit.<sup>3</sup> The deaths of one war cause speedy preparations for revenge.<sup>4</sup> "We should seek a general peace and pray God for it, that by peace and in time of peace we may progress in morality and the sciences, since we cannot otherwise; as the Apostle feels when he says: 'The peace of God which passeth all understanding keep your hearts and your minds:' your minds, which are reasonable souls, are not kept but are often destroyed by wars, discords and civil brawls which are like wars, and by the continuance of all such. Therefore, as far as he can, every good man should avoid and flee them; and when he takes to war, being unable otherwise to obtain his rights, he ought as much as possible to shorten it. . . . Thus universal peace is the end we seek."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Guillaume de Nogaret uses the same pious cover for his scheme of social reform. One had to bow, so to speak, to the crusading ideal and then one was free to suggest anything!

<sup>3</sup> *Quanto frequentius bella committunt, tanto magis appetunt committere, hoc consuetudine magis quam emendatione deputantes.* Par. 2.

<sup>4</sup> "Ad bellum et vindictam voluntariam se preparant."

<sup>5</sup> Par. 27, *in fine*.

It is agreed that peace is desirable; but, says Dubois, "since it is proved that neither the Scriptures, nor sermons drawn from the Scriptures, nor the elegant lamentations and exhortations of preachers have been sufficient to stop frequent wars and the temporal and eternal death of so many human beings which have resulted, why should there not be found at last a new remedy for militarism (*remedium manus militaris*), as for example a judiciary backed by force (*justicia necessario compulsiva*)?" (par. 109). "This is an argument," he declares, "to which a reply is impossible morally and politically speaking." Peace has come within states by *vis coactiva*: so also it will come between states. One could not have a clearer statement of political judgment upon the evidence. The author himself says that he depends upon experience for his opinions: and he declares that exhortations to peace and praise of its excellencies and even rhetorical attacks on war are politically valueless. They have been tried and they have failed.

Before speaking, however, of the means by which peace is to be established between states, we must notice the plan which is *not* suggested by Pierre Dubois. The governing ideal of medieval politics, unity, led many to look for peace through subordination to one overlord. "Now there is no sane man, I think," Dubois writes, (par. 63), "who could think it likely that in this latest age (*in hoc fine saeculorum*) there could be one monarch of the whole world in temporal affairs who would rule all and whom as superior all would obey. For, if there were any attempt at this there would be wars, seditions and discords without end; nor would there be any one who could allay them by reason of the number of different nations, the distance and distinction between countries and the natural inclination of men to diverge. Although some have been popularly called "lords of the world" nevertheless I think that since the countries were settled there never has been any one

whom all obeyed." That passage, if it seems to condemn Dante as a *homo non sane mentis*, certainly shows an historical acumen and a political judgment far superior to the opinions of the *De Monarchia*. Dubois recognizes the impossibility of arriving at peace by means of the conquest by one state of all other states. He sees that world-power is nonsense.

It must be admitted, however, that from the passages of the *Summaria brevis* which have been commented upon by M. de Wailly and Ernest Renan, one might judge that Dubois hoped for a domination in Europe of the French king. He held, indeed, that it should be arrived at by diplomacy and not by war, but in the above passage of the *De recuperatione* he seems to condemn not merely any special means, but dreams of domination by a single lord.

Inconsistency may be urged against him, and yet it must be remembered that here he is writing to the English king and also that he may very well have felt uncertain as to how the *vis coactiva* above the warring states might be established, even if he held quite clearly to the notion that the ultimate supremacy of one monarch was impossible. But let us turn to the definite political means he suggests for establishing peace between European states.

The means by which such peace is to be arrived at are: *First*: International arbitration and the establishment of an international judiciary. This is to begin by a general council (par. 3), a preliminary to all medieval and early Renaissance plans for reform. But what is unusual in Pierre Dubois is the statement that the difficulty of arranging matters is due to the fact that the cities of Italy, for example, and the various princes acknowledge no superior. "Before whom then," he asks, "can they bring their disputes? It can be answered that the council should establish elected arbiters (*arbitros*) religious or others, prudent, experienced and trustworthy men." These are to select

three prelates and three others for either party to the dispute. They are to be well paid and such as are not likely to be corrupted by affection, hate, fear, greed or otherwise. They are to meet at a suitable place, to have presented to them in a summary and clear form, without minor and unimportant details, the pleas of either side. They are to take evidence from witnesses and documents, each witness being examined by at least two trustworthy and careful members of the "jury." The depositions are to be written and preserved. "For the decision, if it is expedient, they are to have assessors (*assessores*) who are thought by them most trustworthy and best trained in the divine, the canon and the civil law."<sup>6</sup>

*Secondly*, these decisions must be made effective. The Holy See is recognized as an influence, but excommunication had better not be used. "Temporal punishment, although incomparably less than eternal, will be more feared."<sup>7</sup> The suggestions in detail of Pierre Dubois are perhaps a little comic, but we must allow for the situation. In the first place any group making war shall, after the war is over, be removed bodily and sent to colonize the Holy Land! If they do not oppose the movement, they may take some of their property with them. The author feels that it may be difficult. He then goes on as to other measures. Suppose, he says, that the Duke of Burgundy declares war against the King of France,—the king should then institute an economic boycott<sup>8</sup> and by a general council the same boycott should be declared by all Europe. Active military measures should be taken to devastate the country so that the whole people should feel it: Dubois, it seems, would adopt extreme measures to prevent war spreading, his main

<sup>6</sup> Par. 12, *De recap. Terre Sancte*.

<sup>7</sup> Excommunication is to be used (§ 101) but not depended upon by itself. Any one refusing to enter the league of peace (*pacis universalis federa*) is to be *immediately attacked*.

<sup>8</sup> *Prohibebit quod nullus ad terras eorum deferat victualia, arma, merces et alia quaecumque bona, etiam quacumque causa sibi debita,*" (par. 5).

point being that in whatever corner it broke out the whole of Europe should act together and at once to stop it.

The reader may feel that this is hopelessly unpractical, since we could not act thus against any great country or against any combination of countries. But we must remember (1) that Dubois supposes Europe to be one political system (*respublica Christicolarum*) able to act in concert at least in some issues, and (2) that every war begins, according to him, in some comparatively small group. Thus practically, if Europe had adopted strong economic, even without military, action during the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913, the war of 1914 might never have occurred. And surely it is not unpractical to suggest that all civilized countries should act together in the case of any conflict breaking out such as that of 1912. Deal effectively with the small conflicts and the first difficulty is met with regard to the larger. But one can imagine the horror of medieval diplomatists if all the states were asked to prevent any small wars by direct intervention of enforcing arbitration. Even to-day all the schemes for rearranging international politics start from the present almost universal war. I cannot help feeling, however, that Dubois was right. Our schemes for doing without war must inculcate combined action in *small* wars. Deal effectively with them and we may never have to deal at all with war between great states. It is the spark, not the conflagration, that we must consider first: and perhaps European diplomacy was more futile in 1912 than in July 1914, although the results of inaction did not show themselves till August, 1914. But let us return to the general thesis and omit further applications of it.

After details as to raising funds for a common force and plans for a common advance on the Holy Land, Dubois recalls himself to his main interest, "a general peace." In the *third* place therefore, he says that no external measures will be effective until the religious attitude is changed.

This opens an elaborate project for the reform of the Roman church. Dubois says (par. 29) if the pope really wants to stop war "he must begin with his brothers the cardinals and his fellow bishops." They are always going to war (*ipsi guerras movent*). Their attitude is quarrelsome even in England and France where they do not actually fight. The monks are as bad. But the whole attack is common to many writers of the date of Pierre Dubois. His remedies are extreme. First he suggests that if the pope had no "temporal power," no one need to go to war for him and that would be a beginning; and next, he actually proposes the confiscation of ecclesiastical property by states and the use of the wealth for common European civilization!<sup>9</sup> But how?

The *fourth* suggestion of Pierre Dubois is that the money should be spent in education.<sup>10</sup> The purpose of the education, according to the general thesis as to the taking of the Holy Land, is directed by the general need of non-military contact with the East. It is urged that you can only hold the East effectively by intellectual superiority to it.

Then begins a long and elaborate scheme of education, primary and secondary. University education is implied but not dealt with in detail. All this is to occur in the Holy Land. It is a well-known medieval trick for writing a Utopia. In 1223 "The Complaint of Jerusalem" gave a plan for reconstructing European society under the guise of a scheme for an Eastern kingdom. So here Dubois, appearing to speak of what ought to be done when the Holy Land is established as a state, is really speaking of the remedies which ought to be applied in Europe. In the matter of education he is as original as in politics, but what is most interesting to us now are the hints for bringing

<sup>9</sup> Par. 57. "Que tendit ad reformationem et unitatem veram totius reipublice catholicorum."

<sup>10</sup> Par. 60. "Studentes et eorum doctores vivent de bonis dictorum prioratum, etc."



the European nations together. Colleges for boys and for girls are to be established where "modern languages" are to be taught—"the literary idioms, especially of Europe, that by these scholars trained to speak and write the languages of all, the Roman church and the princes of Europe should be able to communicate with all men." Some are also to be taught medicine, some surgery—the girls also (par. 61); and these girls, in the medieval fashion perhaps, are to be married to foreigners, even Orientals (*ditioribus Orientalibus in uxores dari*). I need not detail the plans for intermarriage and colonization, among which is inserted a suggestion for a married clergy (par. 102). A long section follows upon the utility of scientific knowledge "according to brother Roger Bacon" (par. 79) and upon the variety of human knowledge in general. There are interesting hints as to the transformation of convents into girls' schools, and as to military reform, for example the institution of definite uniforms (par. 16). But all these do not bear directly upon his plans for peace and we may therefore omit them here. His boldness of conception is clear.

The other element in his Utopia, which is to establish peace, is a modification of the processes of law (par. 90 f.). The processes must be shortened according to a definite plan; but the detail need not concern us here. The fact remains that he saw that social, educational and religious reform within the state are all means for the attainment of international peace.

The closing section of the work (110-142) are addressed to Philip, king of France, who is asked to send the preceding to Edward I. Dubois urges the economic gain from the abolition of wars, and in the meantime the institution of various military reforms—as for example the regular payment of troops. It is amusing to note that the author feels the danger to himself from the powers that be, if his projects are made too public. He therefore asks

both Edward I and Philip to consider his ideas more or less privately; and he hints that one who does not happen to hold popular opinions may suffer even physical assault.

So far as we know nothing evil happened to Pierre Dubois. He was a lawyer who worked first for the king of France and afterward, when he wrote the *De recuperatione*, in the service of Edward I in Guyenne. He seems to have represented the central government in either case, and to have found his chief opponents among the churchmen. He is known as the author of a popular pamphlet in French against papal claims, as the writer of a few short Latin treatises, and as the elected representative of Coutances at the *Etats Généraux* which met in Tours in 1308. After that nothing is known of him.

More than six hundred years have gone since the treatise of Pierre Dubois was forgotten: and one may well rub one's eyes in wonder at what is now occurring in Europe. Perhaps we are dreaming. The practical man will say that the old plans for political reform are by current events proved to be valueless; that the internationalists are shown by the facts to be unable to understand real politics. And yet one would have thought that any plan might have been better worth trying than one which has brought us to our present pass. However that may be we should not despair too soon. Ecclesiastical reformation was suggested for hundreds of years before Europe arrived at the comparatively tolerant situation in religion now established. Political reformation may be more difficult, but the work of its forerunners is important. *Si Lyra non lyrasset, Lutherus non saltasset*: so also in politics, the effective reformer is taught by his predecessors who found the circumstances of their time too strong for them.

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